CIRCLEVILLE CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES 12/16/2025

Circleville City Council convened in Council Chambers Tuesday, December 2, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. Council members present at Roll call: President Barry Keller, At Large Members Katie Logan-Hedges and Tom Klitzka, First Ward Jeff Hallinin, Second Ward John Moats, Third Ward Audrey Lukasak, Fourth Ward Tom Duvall and Clerk Melissa Burns. Absent Member: Sheri Theis. Invited guests present: Mayor Michelle Blanton, Law Director Kendra Kinney, Auditor Mark Bidwell, Service Director Jim Stanley and Utilities Director Brian Frost.

President Keller called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and invocation was given by all.

Moats motioned to approve City Council minutes from December 2, 2025. Lukasak seconded. Motion carried.

REPORTS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Hedges reminded everyone that St. Joseph Catholic Church on Mound Street will host a Christmas Day meal.
Klitzka provided an update on the proposed marijuana dispensary, noting that the current moratorium expires on February 6.
Duval noted that he has an Ordinance on the Agenda for a second reading.
Keller announced that this evening would be the final meeting for Audrey Lukasak and expressed gratitude for her service. Keller also stated that the swearing-in ceremony for new Council members and the Clerks will take place at 6:30 p.m. on January 6, 2026, officiated by Judge Elisa Peters.
Lukasak shared reflections on her term in office and encouraged community members to seek opportunities to become involved.

REPORTS FROM CITY OFFICIALS:
Mayor Blanton thanked Council for a productive 2025 and expressed optimism for 2026. The Mayor noted that annual reports will be available by January 7, 2026, and additional details regarding the State of the City address will be provided early in the new year.

QUESTIONS OR ANSWERS TO ADMINISTRATION:
Lukasak inquired whether Mayor Blanton had updates regarding the Housing Resource Alliance. The Mayor responded that several individuals in the City have volunteered to assist the homeless population and that a federally mandated homeless count will be conducted in January within a designated area.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:
Shawna Hartsaugh, representing Uptown Circleville, thanked the Council for its ongoing support and highlighted recent Uptown initiatives, including the 3-on-3 basketball tournament, Mrs. Roper's Crawl, downtown decorations, and the Light the Park event.
Aaron Barthelmas thanked the Council for its efforts to maintain safe drinking water and expressed concern for residents on fixed incomes.
Hellen Maddox raised concerns about the proposed water rate increase, questioning whether residents can afford it, and asked whether the next phase of the water treatment plant project could be postponed.
Dave Horning discussed upcoming federal compliance deadlines for PFAS regulations and suggested delaying action on the water treatment plant until the final regulations are released.

COMMUNICATIONS: NONE.

ORDINANCES FOR THIRD READING:

a) AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR CURRENT EXPENSES AND OTHER EXPENDITURES OF THE CITY OF CIRCLEVILLE, STATE OF OHIO, DURING THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2026

Discussion: Hedges stated this Ordinance is the 2026 budget, totaling $39,610,519.43. This amount reflects a decrease of nearly $13 million from the prior year, primarily due to the completion of the wastewater treatment plant loan. Bidwell added that the budget also includes $17.6 million from Enterprise Funds and $21.8 million from City funds.

MOTION-ROLL CALL -VOTE:

Hedges motioned to passage of the Ordinance. Klitzka seconded. Roll call. (6 Yeas- 0 Nays). The Ordinance is passed and assigned #12.94.2025.

ORDINANCES FOR SECOND READING:

b) AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH WATER RATES FOR WATER SERVICES TO THE USERS OF THE WATER WORKS SYSTEM OF THE CITY OF CIRCLEVILLE, OHIO AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Discussion: Frost addressed misinformation published in the Herald, clarifying that deadlines for PFAS regulations are outlined in 40 CFR Part 141, Subpart Z. He noted that while the EPA may grant extensions, the City is proceeding based on current requirements and anticipated new maximum contaminant levels (MCLs). Frost emphasized that the existing plant, built in 1962 with some original pumps, has exceeded its useful life and cannot adequately address emerging contaminants that a proposed membrane filtration system would handle. He cautioned that delaying action risks violations, rushed construction, and higher costs due to inflation. Frost highlighted the importance of safe drinking water, current compliance with existing standards, and the favorable timing for grant applications. He confirmed that the project and rate structure were thoroughly reviewed over 14 months. In response to questions, Frost affirmed alignment with EPA guidance and stressed the risks of postponement. Mayor Blanton noted ongoing needs for pipe replacement and grant eligibility requirements. Hallinin observed that the typical lifespan of a water treatment plant is 40–50 years, and Frost added that reusable components from the current facility will be incorporated where possible.

MOTION-ROLL CALL -VOTE:

Hedges motioned to suspend the rules. Hallinin seconded. Roll call. (5 Yeas- 1 Nays). Rules are not suspended and the Ordinance will be held for a third reading on January 6, 2026.

c) A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICE TO APPLY FOR, ACCEPT, AND ENTER INTO A WATER SUPPLY REVOLVING LOAN ACCOUNT (WSRLA) AGREEMENT TO FUND THE UTILITY IMPROVEMENTS FOR WALNUT STREET PROJECT CONSTRUCTION; TO AWARD THE UTILITY IMPROVEMENTS FOR WALNUT STREET TO DARBY CREEK EXCAVATING INC. AND DESIGNATING A DEDICATED REPAYMENT SOURCE FOR THE LOAN.

Discussion: Stanley stated this Ordinance will award the City the CDBG grant funds.

MOTION-ROLL CALL -VOTE:

Duvall motioned to hold this Ordinance for a third reading. Hedges seconded. Roll call. (6 Yeas- 0 Nays). The Ordinance will be held for a third reading on January 6, 2026.

ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READING:

d) AN ORDINANCE APPOINTING A CLERK OF CITY COUNCIL FOR THE CITY OF CIRCLEVILLE, OHIO, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Discussion: Keller stated this Ordinance appoints a Clerk of City Council for the upcoming term, and names Melissa Burns as that Clerk.

MOTION-ROLL CALL -VOTE:

Hallinin motioned to suspend the rules. Moats seconded. Roll call. (6 Yeas- 0 Nays). Rules are Suspended.

MOTION-ROLL CALL -VOTE:

Klitzka motioned for passage of the Ordinance. Hedges seconded. Roll call. (6 Yeas- 0 Nays). The Ordinance is passed and assigned #12.95.2025.

e) AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 123.01(a)(2) OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF CIRCLEVILLE FOR THE POSITION OF CLERK OF COUNCIL AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Discussion: Keller noted this and the following Ordinances establish hourly rates for the Clerk and Assistant Clerk for Committee work and special projects.

MOTION-ROLL CALL -VOTE:

Hedges motioned to suspend the rules. Moats seconded. Roll call. (6 Yeas- 0 Nays). Rules are Suspended.

MOTION-ROLL CALL -VOTE:

Hallinin motioned for passage of the Ordinance. Moats seconded. Roll call. (6 Yeas- 0 Nays). The Ordinance is passed and assigned #12.96.2025.

f) AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 123.01(b)(2) OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF CIRCLEVILLE FOR THE POSITION OF ASSISTANT CLERK OF COUNCIL AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Discussion: This Ordinance serves as a companion to the previous Ordinance, setting the hourly rate for the Assistant Clerk.

MOTION-ROLL CALL -VOTE:

Hallinin motioned to suspend the rules. Lukasak seconded. Roll call. (6 Yeas- 0 Nays). Rules are Suspended.

MOTION-ROLL CALL -VOTE:

Duvall motioned for passage of the Ordinance. Lukasak seconded. Roll call. (6 Yeas- 0 Nays). The Ordinance is passed and assigned #12.97.2025.

g) A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE USE OF OPIOID FUNDS TO PICKAWAY ADDICTION ACTION COALITION AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Discussion: Hedges stated that this Resolution allocates an additional $15,000 in opioid settlement funds to the Pickaway Addiction Action Coalition.

MOTION-ROLL CALL -VOTE:

Klitzka motioned to suspend the rules. Moats seconded. Roll call. (6 Yeas- 0 Nays). Rules are Suspended.

MOTION-ROLL CALL -VOTE:

Klitzka motioned for adoption of the Resolution. Hallinin seconded. Roll call. (6 Yeas- 0 Nays). The Resolution is adopted and assigned #12.98.2025.

h) AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE ANNUAL APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE IN THE GENERAL FUND 101 OF THE CITY OF CIRCLEVILLE

Discussion: Hedges explained that this is the eleventh housekeeping Ordinance of the year and results in a net-zero change to the budget. Bidwell clarified that it involves reallocating funds between accounts within the general fund.

MOTION-ROLL CALL -VOTE:

Hedges motioned to suspend the rules. Lukasak seconded. Roll call. (6 Yeas- 0 Nays). Rules are Suspended.

MOTION-ROLL CALL -VOTE:

Hallinin motioned for passage of the Ordinance. Moats seconded. Roll call. (6 Yeas- 0 Nays). The Ordinance is passed and assigned #12.99.2025.

i) RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE AMOUNTS AND RATES AS DETERMINED BY THE BUDGET COMMISSION AND AUTHORIZING THE NECESSARY TAX LEVIES AND CERTIFYING THEM TO THE COUNTY AUDITOR

Discussion: Bidwell stated that this is the annual tax budget resolution, initially prepared in June and submitted to the County Auditor for review. Following revisions and correspondence with the Auditor's office, the resolution is now ready for approval.

MOTION-ROLL CALL -VOTE:

Hedges motioned to suspend the rules. Klitzka seconded. Roll call. (6 Yeas- 0 Nays). Rules are Suspended.

MOTION-ROLL CALL -VOTE:

Hedges motioned for adoption of the Resolution. Lukasak seconded. Roll call. (6 Yeas- 0 Nays). The Resolution is adopted and assigned #12.100.2025.

j) A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE USE OF OPIOID FUNDS TO HAVEN HOUSE FOR THE YEAR OF 2026 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Discussion: Hedges noted that this resolution provides a one-time allocation of $20,000 in opioid settlement funds to Haven House for 2026, following a presentation by Lisa Johnson at the prior Finance Committee meeting.

MOTION-ROLL CALL -VOTE:

Hallinin motioned to suspend the rules. Lukasak seconded. Roll call. (6 Yeas- 0 Nays). Rules are Suspended.

MOTION-ROLL CALL -VOTE:

Lukasak motioned for adoption of the Resolution. Hallinin seconded. Roll call. (6 Yeas- 0 Nays). The Resolution is adopted and assigned #12.101.2025.

New Business:

a) Matt Tootle Circleville-Pickaway Lease Oversight Board (Ohio Health) application.

Discussion: Keller stated Matt Tootle has an application to be reappointed for a four-year term to the Circleville-Pickaway Lease Oversight Board (Ohio Health).

MOTION-ROLL CALL -VOTE:

Hallinin motioned to reappoint Matt Tootle to the Circleville-Pickaway Lease Oversight Board (Ohio Health). Moats seconded. Roll call. (6 Yeas- 0 Nays). Motion carried.

Lukasak motioned to excuse Sheri Theis from tonight's Council meeting. Duvall seconded. Roll call. (6 Yeas- 0 Nays). Motion carried.

Hallinin motioned to adjourn the City Council meeting. Moats seconded. Council adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Minutes prepared by: Melissa Burns, Clerk.